

S.A.V.E. the Children

Prevention & Intervention In K-3

Ensuring students master basic **SKILLS** needed to excel in the classroom.

Building **ALLIANCES** between home and school.

Providing **VALUABLE** training for teachers to implement prevention and intervention programs.

Fostering **EARLY** learning success lays the foundation for later life success.

Public Act 582 of 2008, sponsored by Senator Nancy Cassis, allows intermediate school districts (ISDs) to develop model early intervening programs for children in kindergarten through third grade and make the programs available to their constituent districts and public school academies.

The **SAVE** program is modeled after the **Early Learning Success Initiative**, which began as a pilot project in the Northville Public Schools, and has proven to be very cost effective. Six Michigan school districts have begun to develop early intervention programs based on the ELSI, and additional districts have begun to train facilitators with skills to develop early learning success programming.

"As a former school psychologist, I have seen that a team approach is the most effective way to overcome learning obstacles. Having parents, teachers and educational specialists working together is vital to giving our young learners the best start possible. Our schools can save money by implementing early intervention programs that help students before they need expensive special education services.

"This is one of the most important achievements in my career as an educator and legislator. I am proud to have been a leader in this regard, and I look forward to working with the ISDs to help them become more involved in early intervention."

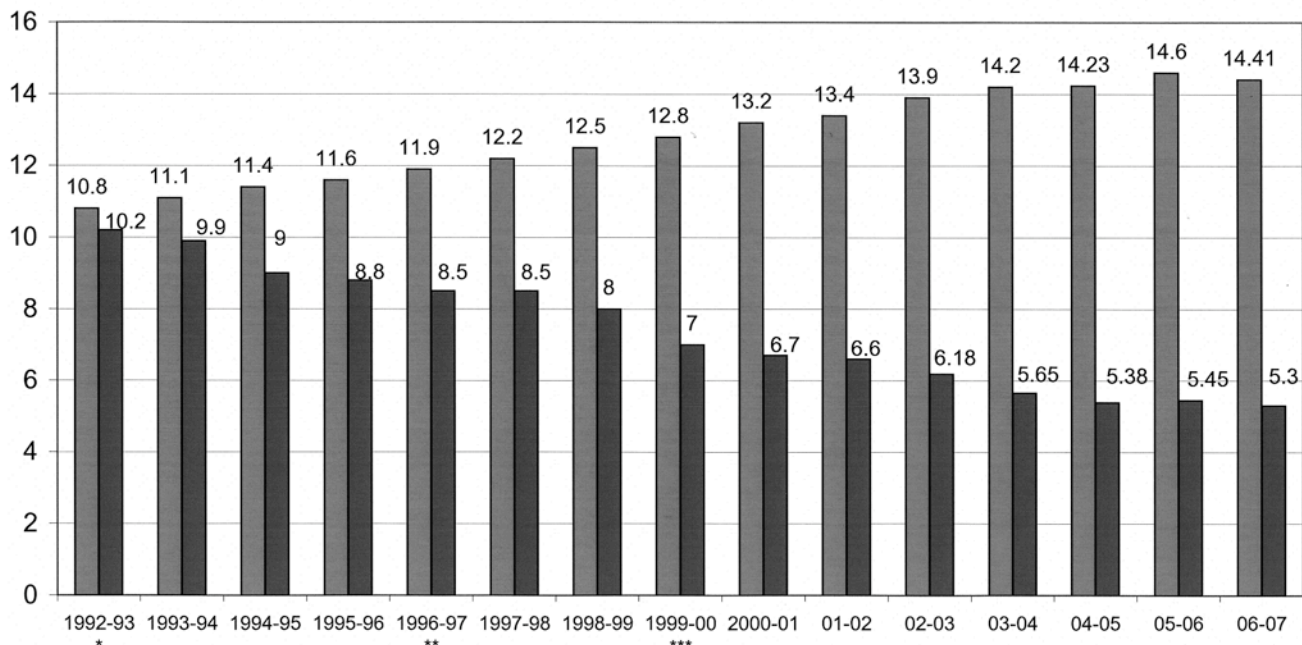
- Senator Nancy Cassis

Early Learning Success Initiative

The Early Learning Success Initiative is a multi-faceted, long term, comprehensive intervention program for K-3. Combining training and implementation in area such as literacy, numeracy, language, motor skills, visual memory, differentiated instruction, assessment, leadership, and home school connections, ELSI has been described as “the gold standard of Response to Intervention”. Focusing on early intervention rather than remediation, and looking at the “whole child” rather than the narrow focus on literacy and/or numeracy, ELSI has directly resulted in the reduction of Special Education placements by up to 50% in the schools and districts in which it has been implemented.

The success of the Early Learning Success Initiative is based on its comprehensive and systematic approach to identifying the learning needs of young children, creating support systems within the school that encourage teachers to get help as soon as possible, and the commitment to long-term training and project development within a school or district. It looks at the whole child, careful not to overlook language, motor skill, behavior and social skills in addition to typically measured academic skills. It encourages the inclusion of parents into the problem-solving and planning for a child. ELSI’s implementation, in schools with varied levels of wealth and size, requires administrative and teacher commitment to developing new systems and skills which will allow students to develop the solid foundation of skills needed for a lifetime of learning success.

Comparison of Michigan Total Special Education Identification Rates to Northville Public School Rates, 1992-93 to 2006-07.



- * Early Intervention training begins.
- ** IST Pilot at Silver Springs Elementary begins.
- *** Full elementary implementation of IST process begins.

■ Michigan ■ Northville

Three Essential Elements of the Early Learning Success Initiative



ONE

Children learn best in classes in which they feel safe and connected. Chaotic classrooms, high anxiety classrooms, or angry classrooms do not support optimal learning. Taking the time to build classroom culture, solid relationships, and clear procedures is an essential part of building an environment which supports early learning success.

TWO

Comprehensive and systematic assessment of the learning needs of children allows teachers to know what a child is ready to learn and deliver instruction at the correct level of challenge. The ELSI uses a simple but comprehensive universal screening tool which can also be used to monitor progress toward the essential skills and behaviors at each of the early grades. We are committed not to overwhelming teachers with complex or unnecessary data collection systems. By focusing on the essential skills and behaviors, and carefully monitoring progress toward those standards, we encourage teachers to help children develop a deep understanding of essential concepts and skills. Additional assessment tools are available to consider the learning needs of children who are not responding to typical instruction.

THREE

A strong support team is needed to respond to teacher requests for help in the early grades. The old notion that a teacher could close her classroom door, and effectively deal with the learning and social needs of all her students is no longer valid. The complex needs of today's students, in combination with the demanding curricula, and the importance of early learning success, make it necessary for teachers to get help as soon as an essential learning need is unresponsive to instruction. Allowing children to experience frustration and failure for several years, before any significant help is offered, is a discredited idea. Early Learning Success sites build collaborative cultures in which support team members are available to respond quickly to teacher requests for help, and have the tools to help identify learning priorities and instructional levels.

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